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BOOK NOTICES.

LA PSYCHOLOGIE ALLEMANDE CONTEMPORAINE (École expérimentale). Par Th. RIBOT. Paris: Germer Baillière. 1879.

In this work M. Ribot has undertaken a task for which he is peculiarly well qualified, both by his sympathies and by his wonderful faculty of clear and concise exposition. Even more than in his book on English Psychology, he has thrown himself into his subject, putting himself forward as the champion of a cause which he believes to have right and justice on its side. Without attempting to add anything to what has been done by others, the author has produced a book that is at once opportune and of great practical utility. It is hardly to be regretted that he has so thoroughly identified himself with the writers of whom he treats as to be unconscious of their limitations; for what, at present, is most wanted is a clear conception of the method and results of the new experimental school of psychology, and this can be best given by one whose intense sympathy precludes adverse criticism. In due time, no doubt, we shall have a more critical estimate.

In a rather vivacious preface, not in the very best of taste, M. Ribot deals some stout blows at the "metaphysical" psychologists, who are told, in very plain terms indeed, that their method is essentially unsound and their results worthless. A bold contrast is drawn between psychology as it was and psychology as it is destined to be. The former is vitiated by its "metaphysical" basis — by which M. Ribot means that it starts from the presupposition of the "Soul," as a substance distinct from and independent of the body. The latter is free from all metaphysical conceptions, and substitutes for the false contrast of two independent things the true notion of a "single phenomenon with a twofold aspect." The former relies entirely upon introspection; the latter depends upon experiment and exact measurement, and hence its results, meagre although they as yet are, rest upon a solid basis of fact, and are not liable to be blown away by every new wind of doctrine. So strongly is M. Ribot convinced of the stability of the new psychology that he converts the want of originality in its representatives into an argument in its favor. When a study has fairly entered upon its scientific stage, he contends, it bears less and less the impress of a single mind or of a single nation, and becomes the common possession of all nations. Thus there seems to be a perfectly clear line of demarcation between the old psychology and the new, which, to the author's mind, are contrasted as the dead and the living. The opposition, however, is not quite consistently maintained. The claim of complete freedom from "metaphysical" presuppositions, which, in the first instance, is put forward as the distinctive mark of experimental psychology, is virtually retracted when it is somewhat grudgingly admitted that it is, "perhaps, a necessity inherent in all psychology, even experimental, to start from some metaphysical hypothesis." So, also, the method of the new psychology is, after all, not that of external observation and experiment, but of combined external and internal observation. And this vacillation is not merely verbal, but is really the index of a contradiction running through the whole reasoning of the school to which M. Ribot belongs. It is a matter of perpetual surprise to those who hold that psychology, in so far as it is a theory of human knowledge, necessarily presupposes metaphysic, and who yet reject the fiction of a "thinking thing" existing in complete isolation, to find all empiricists

assuming that a denial of the latter presupposition must of necessity carry with it a denial of the former. It is a matter of still greater surprise that those who ostensibly banish the fiction of a separate "Soul" should reintroduce it again in admitting that pure inner observation is a separate source of knowledge. The fact that this is done indirectly proves that shutting one's eyes to the metaphysical implications of one's system only leads to the substitution of unreasoned for reasoned metaphysic.

From what has been said, the general character of M. Ribot's work will be evident. "Under the form of history," as the author himself admits, "the aim is dogmatic." The body of the work is occupied with a statement of the four topics that have mainly engrossed the attention of the experimental school of psychology in Germany—the theory of local signs, the origin of the notion of extension, the measurement of the quantity of sensation, and the determination of the duration of psychical acts. The rest of the volume is occupied with an account of the gradual way in which the latest results have been prepared for, and of the disputes on minor points within the experimental school itself. The pioneer of the new psychology was Herbart, who occupies a middle position between pure speculation and experimental psychology. His merit is to have shown that psychical acts are capable of quantitative measurement. The ethnographic school of psychologists, represented by Waitz, Lazarus, and Steinthal, although they differ widely in their method from Herbart, are yet able to claim him as master, on account of his view that psychology must remain incomplete so long as it views man simply as an isolated individual. These writers do not make experiments, and hence M. Ribot gives only the faintest outline of their philosophical creed. Still more superficial is the account of Beneke, who, in fact, is rather out of place in the pantheon of Experimental Psychologists, his chief claim to rank being that he fought bravely against *a priori* theories at the moment of their triumph, and thus helped on the downfall of the speculative psychologists. So far, M. Ribot has only been skimming. It is when he comes to treat of Lotze that he begins to warm up to his work, for Lotze is the originator of the well-known "local sign" theory—with which the readers of this JOURNAL are tolerably familiar, from the articles of Mr. Cabot and Prof. James—a theory accepted in a modified form by Helmholtz, Wundt, and the experimentalists generally. M. Ribot does not attempt to give a statement of Lotze's comprehensive system as a whole, but practically limits himself to his theory of local signs. In the next chapter, however, dealing with the so-called "nativistic" and "empiristic" theories of the origin of Space, the author is thoroughly at home, for the last taint of metaphysic, strongly marked even in Lotze, disappears, and we get down to a purely experimental basis. From this point onward, M. Ribot is at his best. The account of the two rival theories of extension—the one regarding the idea of extension as connate to the organism, and the other looking upon it as gradually acquired—is concise and lucid, and may be advantageously compared with Mr. Sully's treatment of the same topic in *Mind*, No. X. Another chapter is devoted to a statement of the psycho-physical researches of Fechner, the clearest I have seen, and to a summary of the main objections to Fechner's psycho-physical "law," based upon that writer's *In Sachen der Psychophysik*. Following Delbœuf, M. Ribot decides that the law is not psychological, but physical. Why, then, one naturally asks, should it be included in Psychology at all? M. Ribot gives three reasons: that the facts on which it is based are of exceptional interest to the psychologist; that it is a new proof of the relativity of knowledge; and that it shows, in regard to quantity, what had been already established in regard to quality, viz., that there is no equality or equivalence between qualities in the

object and states of consciousness in the subject. But it is no valid reason for including in a science facts that belong properly to another science, that the former uses them as *data*; nor can the other arguments be regarded as more than an expression of the false dualism which sets subject and object opposite to each other, as complete, apart from any inner relation to each other. A long chapter is occupied with a statement of the topics treated of by Wundt in his *Grundzuge der Physiologischen Psychologie*, sufficiently full to give an idea of the varied contents of that important work, but not full enough to absolve the student of psychology from the trouble of reading the original. Next follows an account of experiments on the duration of psychical acts, and a concluding chapter is devoted mainly to Horwicz and Brentano.

No better introduction to experimental psychology could be put into the hands of the student than M. Ribot's book, and the authors whose views he epitomizes may congratulate themselves on having secured a disciple so enthusiastic, and with so great a gift of popular statement.

JOHN WATSON.

LA SCIENCE POLITIQUE. REVUE INTERNATIONALE. Paraissant, le 1er de Chaque Mois, dirigée par le Professeur Emile Acolas, Ancien Professeur de Droit Civil Français à l'Université de Berne; Membre de la Société d'Economie Politique; de la Société d'Anthropologie et de la Société de Linguistique. (Sur notre drapeau est écrit: "Emanicipation par la Science; Justice et Liberté pour tous.") Paris: Librairie A. Ghio, Palais Royal, Galerie d'Orléans, 1, 3, 5 et 7. Première Année. No. 6, Décembre, 1878, à No. 12, June, 1879.

The following partial list of articles in the six numbers of this magazine will convey an idea of the scope of its discussions:—

No. 6—By Emile Acolas, on the Principal Theories in the Science of Politics (Aristotle); by Dr. Louis Buechner, on the Physiological Nature and Social Destiny of Woman; by Jules Soury, on the History of Civilization; by Léon Cahun, on the Directing Classes; by C. Issaurat, on Primary Education at the Exposition.

No. 7—By Emile Acolas, on the False Principle of the Separation of Powers; by Py y Margall, on the Federation; by J. Soury, on the History of Civilization and the Theory of Evolution; by A. S. Morin, on the Historians of Jesus.

No. 8—By Emile Acolas, on Marriage; by Maria Deraismes, on the Philosophy of History.

No. 10—By Professor Charles Schoebel, an Introduction to a Philosophical Catechism; by Dr. Paul Topinard, on The Human Brain: Its Evolution Through the Ages; by Mme. B. Gendre, on M. Taine and the Education of Woman.

No. 11—By Gabriel de Mortillet, on The Origins of Man; by A. S. Morin, on The Latin Races.

No. 12—By Viollet-le-Duc, on Art in Paris; by J. Baissac, on The Age of God (i.e., the age in which a belief in God prevails).

VERHANDLUNGEN DER PHILOSOPHISCHEN GESELLSCHAFT ZU BERLIN. Leipsig. By ERICH KOSCHNY.

The sixth number of these proceedings (1877) of the Philosophical Society of Berlin is devoted to a lecture, by Dr. Gustav Engel, "On Empirical, Practical, and Philosophical Knowledge," and an essay, by Dr. Adolf Lasson, on Prof. Harms's recent work, "Philosophy since the Time of Kant."

The seventh and eighth numbers (for 1878) give an essay, by Dr. v. Heydebreck, on the "Limits of Painting and Sculpture," and a lecture, by Dr. Frederichs,

"On the Conception of Religion, and on the Main Stages of Religious Development."

The ninth number (also for 1878) is devoted entirely to Dr. v. Kirchmann's essay "On Probability."

The tenth and eleventh numbers (1878) are devoted to Prof. Dr. Michelet's "History of the Philosophical Society at Berlin" (on the basis of a lecture delivered by him before the society, at its session of the 26th of January, 1878.)

The twelfth number (1879) contains a lecture of Privatdocent Dr. J. H. Witte (of the University of Bonn), on immediate perception (*Anschaulichkeit*) in the sensory, and the same in the thinking activity. It was delivered before the Philosophical Society, March 30, 1878. *ANSCHAUEN*—according to Jacob Grimm, *=aspicere, contemplari, intueri*—in English means *to contemplate, to consider, to look upon, to behold*, always with a sense of the immediate presence or objectivity of what is "intuited." [There is no word in German Philosophy which occasions more difficulty to translators.]

The thirteenth and fourteenth numbers (1879) are occupied with Dr. J. H. von Kirchmann's review of E. von Hartmann's *Phenomenology of the Ethical Consciousness*—*Prolegomena to every future ethical system*—delivered as a lecture, November 30, 1878, before the Philosophical Society; and with the discussion that followed the reading of the paper.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

A VOYAGE WITH DEATH, AND OTHER POEMS. By Adair Welcker. Oakland, Cal.: Strickland & Co. 1879.

ADDENDA TO BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HYPER-SPACE AND NON-EUCLIDEAN GEOMETRY. By George Bruce Halstead. From the *American Journal of Mathematics*, Vol. I., 1878, and Vol. II., 1879.

NOTES ON THE FIRST ENGLISH EUCLID. By same author, and from the same periodical.

GEOMETRY, OLD AND NEW; its Problems and Principles. A paper by B. Gratz Brown. St. Louis: 1879.

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE. A sermon preached before the Synod of Perth and Stirling, at Perth, October 15, 1878, by the Rev. George Mure Smith. Stirling, Scotland.

LA PHILOSOPHIE POUR TOUS. Organe Proudhonien Revue Philosophique, Littéraire et Scientifique. Directeur: Decandin Labessee. Années 1876 et 1877. Paris, 9 Rue Taranne. 1878.

OUR LABOR DIFFICULTIES. The cause and the way out; including the paper on the displacement of labor by improvements in machinery, by W. Godwin Moody. Boston: A. Williams & Co. 1878.

IN THE MATTER OF CERTAIN BADLY-TREATED MOLLUSKS. By Robert E. C. Stearns. Read before the California Academy of Sciences, April 21, 1879.

SYMPTOMS OF DECLINE IN RACES. The Chancellor's Prize Essay, read in the Theatre, Oxford, June 27, 1878, by George Spencer Bower, B.A. Oxford: 1878.